

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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O R 301604Z APR 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE
INFO AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL LAHORE

UNCLAS STATE 098369

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PK, US

SUBJECT: SPOKEMAN'S COMMENTS ON PAKISTAN

REF: ISLAMABAD 4370

1. PAKISTAN WAS NOT RPT NOT MENTIONED IN APRIL 29 WHITE HOUSE PRESS BRIEFING.
2. DEPARTMENT (CARTER) PRESS BRIEFING APRIL 29 PRODUCED FOLLOWING EXCHANGES ON PAKISTAN.

BEGIN QUOTE: Q. CAN YOU BRING US UP TO DATE ON THE SITUATION VIS-A-VIS PAKISTAN? WAS THERE A PROTEST MADE ON MR. BUTO'S COMMENTS? A. YES. WE HAVE EXPRESSED OUR CONCERNS TO THE PAKISTANI EMBASSY HERE, THROUGH UNDER SECRETARY FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS PHILIP HABIB. OUR EMBASSY HAS ALSO EXPRESSED THE SAME VIEW TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
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PAKISTAN THERE.

Q. THIS IS WHAT? A. A STRONG EXPRESSION OF CONCERN ABOUT WHAT WE CONSIDER AND CHARACTERIZE AS GROUNDLESS ALLEGATIONS ABOUT SUPPOSED AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN OPPOSITION CAMPAIGN TO OVERTHROW THE PRIME MINISTER OF PAKISTAN.

Q. GROUNDLESS WHAT? A. ALLEGATIONS.

Q. HODDING, HAVE WE MADE ANY PREVIOUS REPRESENTATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN ABOUT THE EARLIER HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS ALONG THESE SAME LINES? WHAT BHUTTO SAID YESTERDAY WAS JUST MAKING FORMAL AND OFFICIAL THINGS THAT THEY HAD BEEN SAYING IN PAKISTANI PRESS AND THAT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAD BEEN TALKING AROUND EARLIER. HAD WE COMPLAINED EARLIER?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT. I DON'T KNOW. WELL, LET ME GO FURTHER ON IT AND TELL YOU, I HAVEN'T SEEN ANYTHING EITHER ON IT.

Q. DID WE ALSO, IN THESE REPRESENTATIONS, AFTER MR. BHUTTO'S SPEECH, DID WE RAISE THE QUESTION OF WIRE-TAPPING OF AMERICAN DIPLOMATS IN ISLAMABAD?

A. I DON'T BELIEVE THAT THAT'S -- WELL, I DON'T KNOW WHETHER THAT SPECIFIC, PARTICULAR, YOU KNOW, THING IS GOING--

Q. DID YOU ASK HIM HOW HE KNEW ABOUT TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS WHICH HE QUOTED BETWEEN TWO AMERICAN DIPLOMATS?

A. NO. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER WE DID OR NOT.

Q. HODDING, WILL THESE ALLEGATIONS HAVE ANY IMPACT ON CONSIDERATION OF ARMS FOR PAKISTAN?
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A. I THINK THAT OUR POLICY ON THE WHOLE ARMS QUESTION IS A QUESTION WHICH IS PART OF OUR OVERALL REVIEW OF ARMS TRANSFER MATTERS. I DON'T THINK THAT THIS SPECIFIC INCIDENT IS PARTICULARLY RELEVANT TO THOSE CONSIDERATIONS.

Q. HOW ABOUT ON GENERAL AID, ECONOMIC AID?

A. I DON'T REALLY HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT, ROY.

Q. HAVE YOU RECONSIDERED SENDING GEORGE VEST AS AMBASSADOR TO PAKISTAN?

A. I HESITATE TO JUMP UP AND DOWN ON THAT, BUT I KNOW OF NO SUCH RECONSIDERATION.

Q. BUT HAVEN'T YOU DONE ANYTHING TECHNICALLY ON THE HILL TO HOLD UP HIS NOMINATION? HAVEN'T YOU WITHDRAWN IT OR--?

A. HOLD ON. Q. WOULD YOU CHECK IT? A. WAIT A MINUTE.

I'M NOT GOING TO CHECK IT. DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING ON THAT?

VOICE: THE APPOINTMENT OF AMBASSADOR VEST?

A. YES.

VOICE: THE HEARINGS HAVE NOT BEEN SCHEDULED YET FOR HIM.

Q. WAIT A MINUTE: THE STATE DEPARTMENT STILL INTENDS THAT GEORGE VEST IS GOING TO BE ITS AMBASSADOR TO PAKISTAN?

A. I UNDERSTAND YOUR QUESTION, AND SINCE I CAN'T GO WITH IT, I'LL TAKE IT. I JUST DON'T KNOW.

Q. WELL, WOULD YOU ADD TO IT: DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT UNCLASSIFIED

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WANT SPEEDY ACTION ON GEORGE VEST'S NOMINATION TO BE AMBASSADOR TO PAKISTAN, OR WOULD YOU RATHER THE SENATE TAKE IT'S MIND AND ENCOURAGE IT TO DELAY HEARINGS? THAT'S A SERIOUS QUESTION. THE FACT THAT THE HEARINGS ARE POSTPONED DOESN'T ANSWER THE QUESTION BECAUSE YOU HAVE A WAY OF ARRANGING FOR POSTPONEMENT OF HEARINGS, IF YOU DON'T WANT THEM HELD RIGHT AWAY.

A. I'M TAKING THAT AS A SERIOUS QUESTION, AND I MIGHT ADD NOT TOO SERIOUSLY THAT OUR ABILITY TO GET SOME OF THE CONFIRMATION PROCESS MOVING ALONG IS NOT ALL THAT GREAT. WE STILL HAVE A LOT OF PEOPLE WALKING AROUND UNCONFIRMED.

Q. HODDING, WHICH ALLEGATIONS DID WE DENY SPECIFICALLY? BUTO TALKED ABOUT NOT ONLY AN ALLEGED PLOT NOW, BUT HE TALKED ABOUT C.I.A. ACTIVITY DATING BACK TO THE ERA OF HIS PREDECESSOR.

A. TO BEGIN WITH, I DON'T WANT TO COMMENT ON C.I.A. MATTERS, HAVE NOT AND WILL NOT, WHAT WE ARE DENYING IN ANY CASE.

Q. THAT WHAT THE ALLEGATIONS ARE ABOUT?

A. NO. HE SAID WE FINANCED AN OPPOSITION CAMPAIGN TO OVERTHROW HIM. WE'RE DENYING THAT SPECIFICALLY.

Q. O.K. WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER ALLEGATION, THAT THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT HAD MEDDLED IN PAKISTANI INTERNAL AFFAIRS UNDER AYUB KAHN, WHICHEVER BRANCH OF --

A. I DON'T HAVE A DIRECT ANSWER TO THAT AS TO WHAT WE
ITEMIZED IN OUR PROTESTS. AS TO WHAT PORTIONS OF AN OVER

HOUR-LONG SPEECH WE TICKED OFF, I DON'T KNOW.
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Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY GENERAL STATEMENT ON OUR POLICY TOWARD
PAKISTAN? OR TOWARD THE BHUTTO GOVERNMENT?

A. NO, I DON'T AND I DON'T WANT TO TRY WING ONE.

Q. WHEN THE SECRETARY IS AT THE CENTO MEETING, WILL HE
DISCUSS ARMS SHIPMENTS TO PAKISTAN WITH PAKISTANI
OFFICIALS.

A. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. ARE ANY BILATERAL TALKS SCHEDULED IN TEHRAN WITH
PAKISTANI OFFICIALS?

A. I DON'T KNOW OF ANY. VOICE: THANK YOU.
CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

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